

MEMORANDUM

TO: Governor James H. Hodges
Members of the General Assembly
The State of South Carolina

FROM: Rubert E. Austin, Superintendent

RE: October 3, 2000

SUBJECT: John de la Howe School Accountability Report FY99/00

I am pleased to submit the Accountability Report of John de la Howe School for FY99/00. The report captures the activities and progress of the agency during my first year as Superintendent. If there are questions or concerns as a result of this report, please contact me at (864) 391-2131, Ext. 113.

The efforts of John de la Howe School are guided by the Mission Statement and Strategic Plan, which were developed in 1996 by a multi-disciplinary team of staff members. This is the last year of the current strategic plan. Objectives and performance measures have been created and actively pursued to provide a therapeutic environment and excellent services to our students. A team of senior staff members, including myself, regularly review the plan and monitor the performance measures.

Enclosed are the descriptions of the four major programs or divisions of John de la Howe School as well as their objectives and the performance measures which define their achievements.

:mbs

JOHN DE LA HOWE SCHOOL
ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT
FY99/00

Executive Summary: John de la Howe School was established in 1797 through the Last Will and Testament of Dr. John de la Howe. The School is defined by its four major programs: Administration, Children's Services, Education, and Support Services. While each program has its own area of emphasis it is the intent of the Agency to work together on achieving the defined objectives. The objectives and their matching outcome measures are listed below.

Objective: We will obtain funding and provide resources that enable programs and services to exist.

Performance

Measure: Comparison of funds budgeted for the year to the actual amount spent.

Objective: We will develop and improve programs and services to strengthen children and families.

Performance

Measure: Progress on Individual Plan of Care

Objective: We will promote and encourage open communication among staff, children, families and the broader community.

Performance

Measure: Consumer surveys indicating the level of satisfaction of the student and the parents or placement agency.

Objective: We will recruit, develop, and retain qualified, caring staff, volunteers and other service providers.

Performance

Measure: Progress on Individual Plan of Care
Consumer surveys for students and parents

Objective: We will preserve and enhance the facilities and grounds to provide the most therapeutic environment possible.

Performance

Measure: Buildings and grounds meet or exceed the standards for certification by DSS for residential child caring programs

In order to plan services to meet the needs of our families we ask for feedback in a variety of ways. The parents of our students are included in the development of the Individual Plan of Care. One time each quarter parents are invited to participate in parent advisory meetings. Surveys are collected at the conclusion of each Family Weekend to allow for input regarding the activities and processes used during the weekend. Students and their guardians are asked to provide feedback regarding the services and staff of John de la Howe School. Through these methods we hope to establish a high level of communication and trust. It has been our experience that much more can be accomplished in this type of environment compared to an environment of limited communication and respect.

The Accountability Report for FY99/00 will provide information regarding the final year of the strategic plan developed in 1996 under the leadership of John C. Shiflet, Jr. The outcome measures will predominantly be generated by our consumers and reflect their level of satisfaction with John de la Howe School. The information gathered and the progress of the agency toward the defined objectives will be used to craft the new strategic plan and determine any modifications necessary to accomplish our Mission.

JOHN DE LA HOWE SCHOOL

Mission Statement

John de la Howe School, a state-supported residential group child care agency since 1918, was founded in 1797 through the Will of Dr. John de la Howe. Our mission is to strengthen children and families from South Carolina who are experiencing difficulties to the extent that planned separation is necessary.

Enabling Statute

Section 59-49-100. *It is declared to be the purpose and policy of the State to maintain and develop the school property in accordance with the purposes of the will of Dr. John de la Howe as interpreted by the Supreme Court of South Carolina, Mars v Gibert, 93 SC 455, which for historical reference reads: 'First, the establishment and maintenance of an agricultural and mechanical school as an institution in Abbeville County, stimulating and improving the life of the entire community; second, the training, free of charge, of twenty-four boys and girls, not as college men and women, but in the beginning of school life; and, third, the like training of the children of the neighborhood not supported by the fund.' It is declared that the term 'Abbeville County' shall be understood to mean that portion of South Carolina known as Abbeville County at the time the will of Dr. John de la Howe was dated, namely January 2, 1797. The property is now in McCormick County. It is further declared that, given the above historical perspective, the Board of Trustees of John de la Howe School shall instruct the Superintendent of the school to implement programs which shall meet the needs of children from all of South Carolina who for some urgent reason need to be separated from their home or community.'*

John de la Howe School was established through the Will and contributions of Dr. John de la Howe in 1797. Dr. de la Howe envisioned a school that utilized the resources of the natural environment to prepare boys and girls to be contributing citizens. Originally the boys and girls attending John de la Howe School were orphans or from families too poor to raise their children. In recent years the students enrolled at John de la Howe School have come from environments where there is little structure or support from the family, they have experienced failure in school and frequently have few or poorly developed social skills. The Agency continues to utilize the resources of the natural environment to create a therapeutic setting for the students and teach the skills which society has indicated are essential to be contributing members of a community. The agency serves children and families across the state of South Carolina by providing services which strengthen family systems and reunify families where planned separation was necessary.

JOHN DE LA HOWE SCHOOL Leadership

The Administrative Team is made up of the Superintendent, the senior manager of Children's Services, Education, and Support Services Departments, as well as the Quality Assurance Coordinator for the agency. This group meets two times a week to set direction, review the agency's performance, and maintain open lines of communication. Information is then shared with the remainder of agency staff through departmental meetings, training events and written communication.

Committees are frequently established to resolve issues that cross departmental lines. They define the problem, develop solutions and help to implement the strategy that is determined to meet the need, and complies with the agency's mission statement. There is regular contact between the committees and the Administrative Team members to provide clarification or direction if necessary. The Administrative Team seeks feedback from the members of the Board of Trustees, middle managers and line staff to develop training, create schedules, and improve efficiency of the agency. All action that requires a change in or the development of policy must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Customer Focus

The "customers" of John de la Howe School are divided into two broad categories. Children and their families are the primary consumers who are considered when the question, who benefits from your services, is asked. The students and families we serve come from every county in the state of South Carolina. The ages of the children range from 10-18 and we have both boys and girls enrolled in our school. The majority of our students are placed at the request of their parents and are functioning a year or more below their academic grade level. In addition, approximately 25% of our students have a psychological diagnosis. The expectations of the families are driven by the needs of their children. Parents want the student to: experience academic success and graduate to the next grade, be in a safe place, receive instruction to improve their social skills, experience success at home with the family, and eventually move back home with the family (reunification).

We are able to determine the satisfaction of these customers through frequent communication. Parents and students are asked to complete formal surveys about their experience with John de la Howe School. Parents participate in parent advisory groups and fill out evaluations following each Family Weekend they are involved in. In addition John de la Howe School seeks input from parents and students on the Individual Plan of Care developed for each child and the plan is reviewed regularly throughout the year.

The remaining customers of John de la Howe School include other state agencies, such as DJJ, DMH, DSS and schools, legislators and our own staff members and volunteers. The concerns and expectations are similar to those of the parents and children. They are expecting: an environment that is safe for staff and students, a level of treatment that is consistent with the presenting problems, information regarding the students' progress, and placement within a reasonable period of time. Due to the expectations being so similar between the two groups the methods used to determine customers' satisfaction are the same.

The agencies are asked to complete surveys regarding the services provided to children and are participants in the development and review of the Individual Plan of Care. John de la Howe School staff members also complete surveys to evaluate the work conditions and supervision of the agency.

JOHN DE LA HOWE SCHOOL
Other Performance Excellence Criteria

Strategic Planning:

The John de la Howe School Strategic Planning team participated in two retreats during the summer of 1995 – June 6-7 at the Belmont Inn and August 10-11 at Savannah Lakes Village. During the first retreat, the Team discussed the planning process, performed a S.W.O.T. (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis, and drafted a mission statement. At the second retreat the Team completed the draft mission statement and began the development of goals and strategies.

The preliminary meetings of the Strategic Planning Team concluded on January 8, 1996, with a general staff meeting facilitated by Randy Lamkin, our strategic planning consultant and President of Organizational Consultants, Inc. This meeting provided an opportunity for every staff member to volunteer for the goal team of their choice. Over the next four months each goal team developed the strategies and activities they felt were necessary to accomplish the five goals developed by the Planning Team. These teams were directed to consider the most important activities over the next 3-5 years within the parameters of their goal statement, identify resources, and provide a measurement instrument to measure progress and performance.

During the April 1996 Board of Trustees meeting, the first draft of the strategic plan was adopted. On June 13, 1996, Board of Trustee members voted to implement the final version of the plan. This document served to guide the programs and services of John de la Howe School over the next five years.

Information Analysis:

Information is gathered from parents, students and coworkers to aid in decisions that are made on a daily basis. Staff members document the behavior of the students they work with and pass that information on to their colleagues. The staff use a specific form to document behavior so that there is consistency of expectations. The information generated is used to determine placement decisions, counseling strategies, and progress of the student. Input from parents regarding the activities and strategies used during our Family Weekends are helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of the format chosen and making decisions regarding additions or deletions of activities to improve outcomes. Students and parents provide direction in the development of Individual Plans of Care. Each student has an Individual Plan of Care with their unique goals outlined and strategies for meeting the goals. The student helps to define the goals and identify his/her strengths to build upon. The Individual Plan of care aids in the decision of interventions and activities implemented daily to help the students progress toward their goals. The school staff examine data from standardized tests to evaluate the lesson plans and activities implemented to teach subject areas. These evaluations are based on the scores from the testing and are recorded from year to year to assist with the identification of any trend for a teacher, subject or student.

Human Resources Focus:

John de la Howe School uses multi-disciplinary teams to resolve issues that cross program boundaries. An example of this process is that a safety committee was established in September of 1999 due to concerns that staff members expressed about the open atmosphere of the campus and tragic incidents that had occurred in other areas such as Columbine, Colorado and Jonesboro, Arkansas.

This team conducted a survey of staff which resulted in a prioritized list of concerns. Recommendations were generated by the multi-disciplinary team and presented to the Administrative Team. Outcomes from this process include the development of identification badges for all John de la Howe School staff members, a detailed description of responsibilities for staff members in situations of fire or natural disasters, and a collaboration with the School Resource Officer of McCormick County Schools to create emergency plans for response to an attack upon staff or students from individuals outside the agency. Other issues such as development of token economy to motivate students, creation of Individual Plans of Care for the students, and the operation of Howe To Industries are all managed in a similar manner.

Employee satisfaction is a significant ingredient in a successful agency. The satisfaction of John de la Howe School employees is monitored in two ways. First is the Employee Incentive Committee which makes recommendations about special incentives that may provide a boost to employee morale. Employees make suggestions to the committee members and discuss areas of concern where there may be potential for change. The second monitoring mechanism is an employee survey which is administered in the spring of the year. The survey asks questions about interactions across departments, supervision, and working conditions. We will continue to examine options for checking the temperature of our work climate and implementing suggestions that increase morale and production.

JOHN DE LA HOWE SCHOOL

Program Name: Children's Services

Program Rank: 1

Description: Children's Services includes the supervision of cottage life, the wilderness program, John C. Shiflet, Jr. Center for Family and Program Enrichment, chapel services, the infirmary, and the intake process. This department is responsible for reviewing all referrals and applications for enrollment, the development of the Individual Plan of Care for each student, monitoring the progress of the student, and providing counseling and spiritual development opportunities for each child. The campus has 12 cottages which can house 10 students each, and the wilderness program has three campsites which also have a maximum capacity of 10 campers. The maximum population of students for our programs at this time is 150. Students receive instruction on developing communication, problem solving, and independent living skills while participating in activities that require the use of these same skills. They also have access to social workers who can schedule individual blocks of time to visit with students and help resolve issues.

Total Cost: \$2,559,765

Cost by Funding Source:

State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted
\$1,970,403	\$ 2,362	\$ 44,935	\$542,065

Goals: To reunify and strengthen the systems of all families who seek enrollment at John de la Howe School.

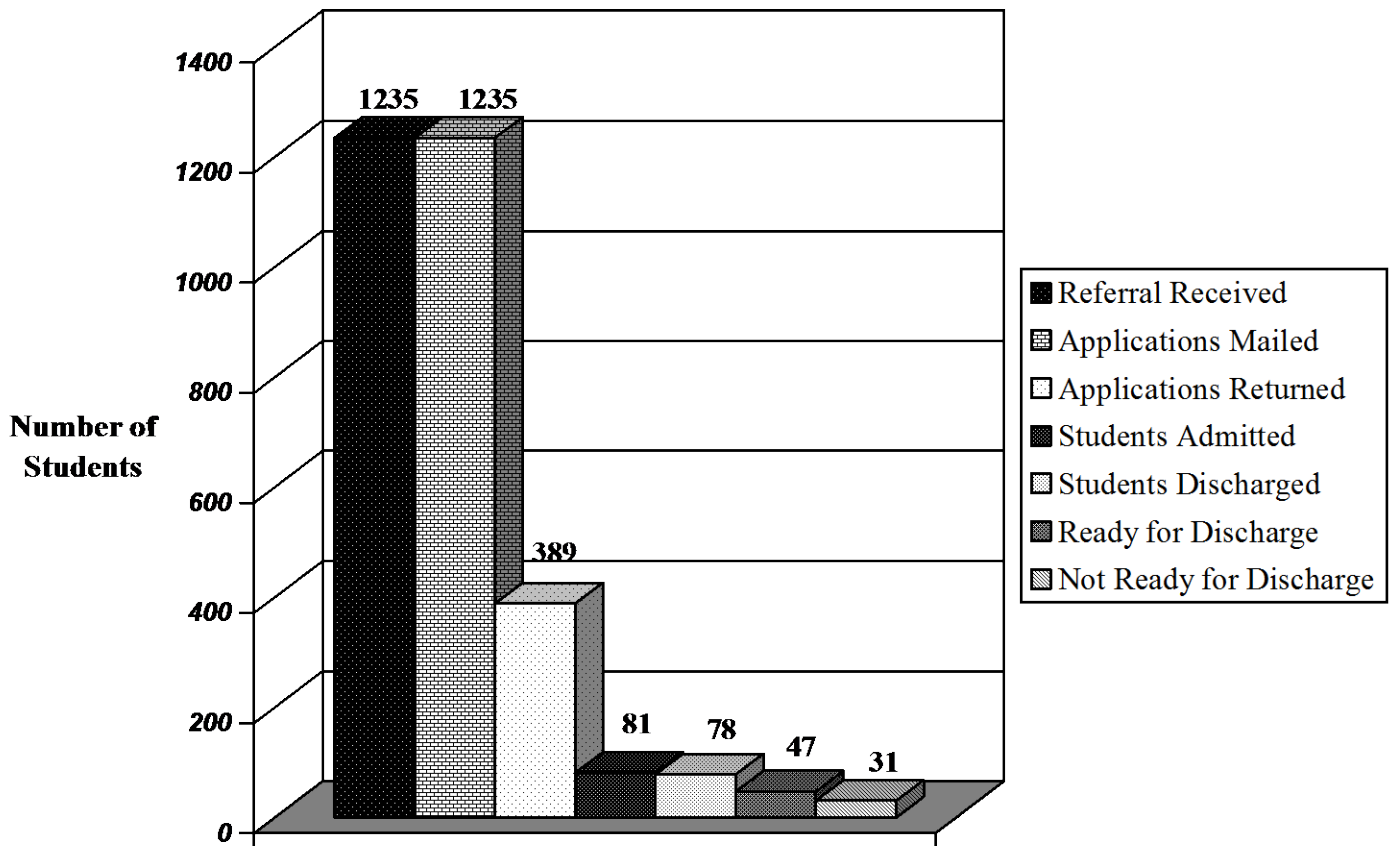
Objective: We will develop and improve programs and services to strengthen children and families.

Performance

Measure: Progress of the student on the Individual Plan of Care

Outcome: In FY99/00, 78 students were discharged, removed by their parents or placed in more restrictive settings. Forty-seven students (60%) had met their goals and were ready for discharge.

In-Take July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000



Objective: We will preserve and enhance the facilities and grounds to provide the most therapeutic environment possible.

Performance Measure: Buildings and grounds will meet or exceed standards for certification by DSS for residential child caring program.

Outcome: In FY98/99 and FY99/00 John de la Howe School was certified by DSS as having met the standards for residential child caring program in South Carolina.

JOHN DE LA HOWE SCHOOL

Program Name: Education Services (L. S. Brice School)

Program Rank: 2

Description: L. S. Brice School provides educational programs for students in grades 4-10. The school offers a full range of studies including English, math, science, music, vocational agriculture and home economics. There are two certified special education teachers on staff to assist students with special needs and 95% of the teachers are ADEPT certified. Students enrolled at John de la Howe School and are in 11th and 12th grades attend McCormick high School.

Total Cost: \$1,049, 125

Cost by Funding Source:

State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted
\$ 698,246	\$53,283	\$ 2,958	\$296,639

Goals: To provide appropriate educational programs for all students in placement at John de la Howe School.

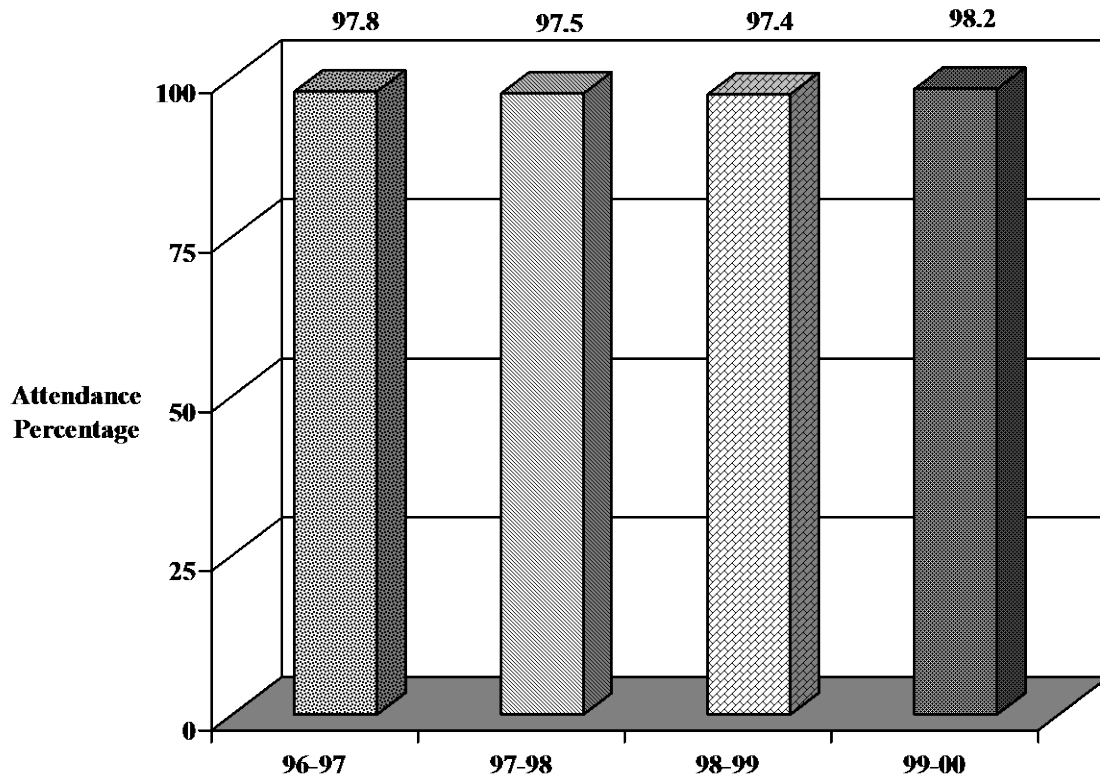
Objective: We will develop and improve programs and services to strengthen children and families.

Performance Measure: Progress of the student on the Individual Plan of Care

Outcome: Students who are traditionally truant from school or have poor attendance patterns increased their frequency of attending school.

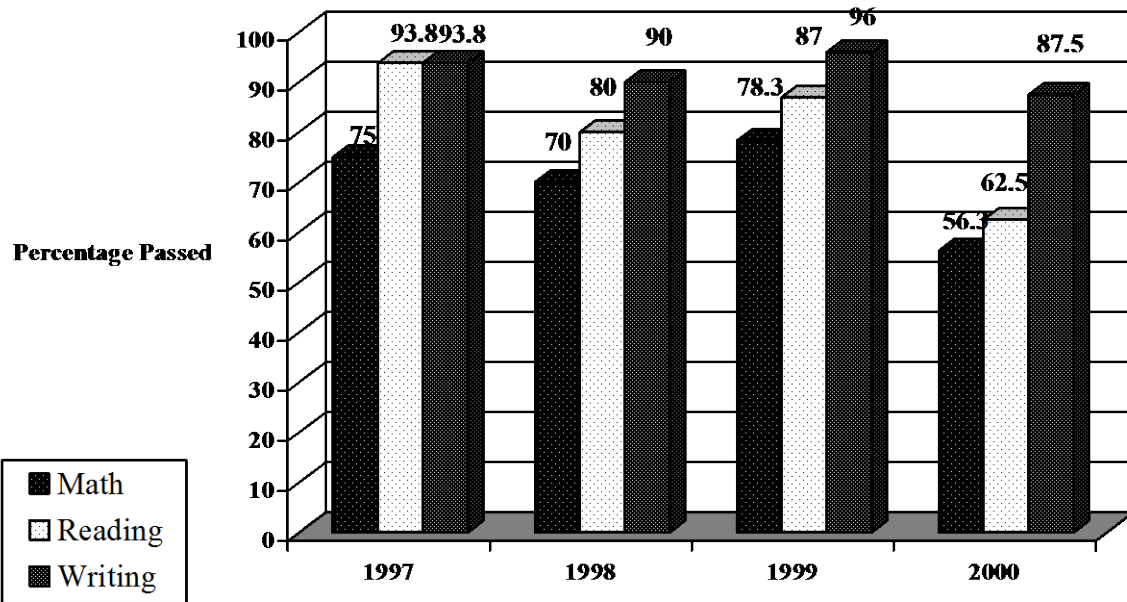
**John de la Howe School
L. S. Brice
School**

Attendance



Outcome: Students who have had poor academic success demonstrate a mastery of skills on the 10th grade exit exam.

Exit Exam (first attempt)



JOHN DE LA HOWE SCHOOL

Program Name: Support Services

Program Rank: 3

Description: The Support Services Department handles a variety of responsibilities which do not fall under the direct purview of the other departments. The maintenance of buildings and grounds, food preparation for students, payroll and accounting services, laundry services and human resources. These activities are necessary to provide an environment that is safe, healthy and therapeutic in nature. Planning for major building projects, budget development and purchasing are also duties performed by this department. The Support Services Department is integrally involved with all of the activities of John de la Howe School and their contributions aid the entire agency to achieve the mission of the school.

Total Cost: \$1,511,207

Cost by Funding Source:

State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted
\$1,171,626	\$72,765	\$157,522	\$109,294

Goals: The development and acquisition of financial and physical support to provide a safe and comfortable environment for students and staff.

Objective: We will obtain funding and provide resources that enable programs and services to exist.

Performance Measure: Comparison of funds budgeted for the year to the actual amount expended.

Outcome: In FY99/00 the budget presented to and approved by the Senate, House, and Board of Trustees was adequate to fund all the programs of John de la Howe School and meet all of the financial obligations of the agency.

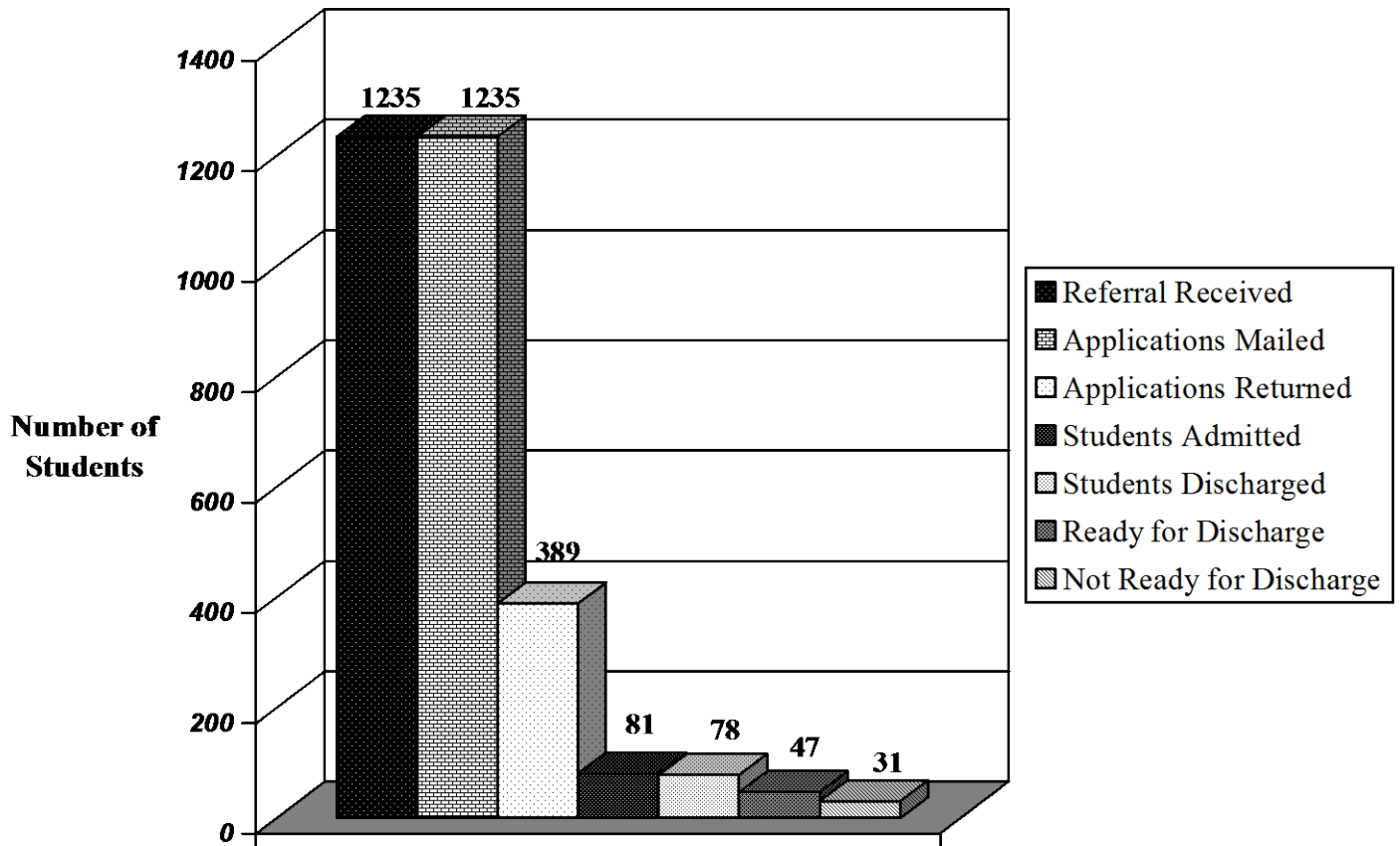
Objective: We will recruit, develop, and retain qualified, caring staff, volunteers and other service providers.

Performance Measure: Progress of student on their Individual Plan of Care

Outcome: Qualified and competent staff members are necessary for students to make changes and meet their goals. Sixty percent of students discharged met their goals.

In-Take

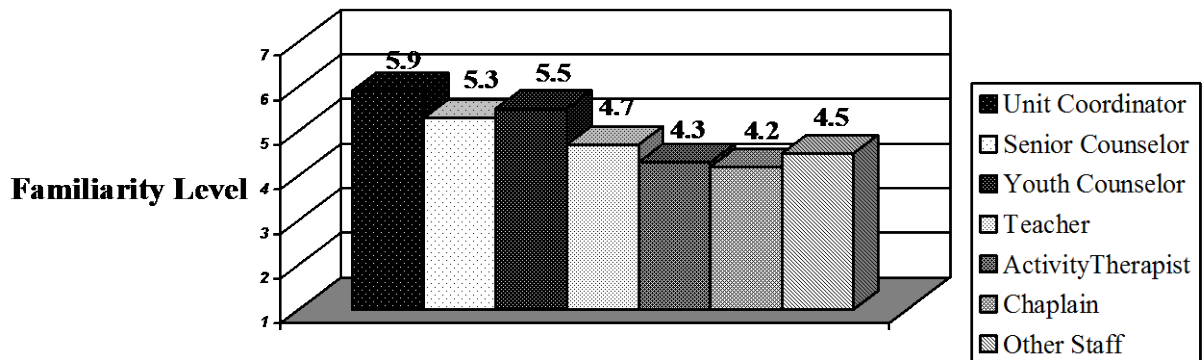
July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000



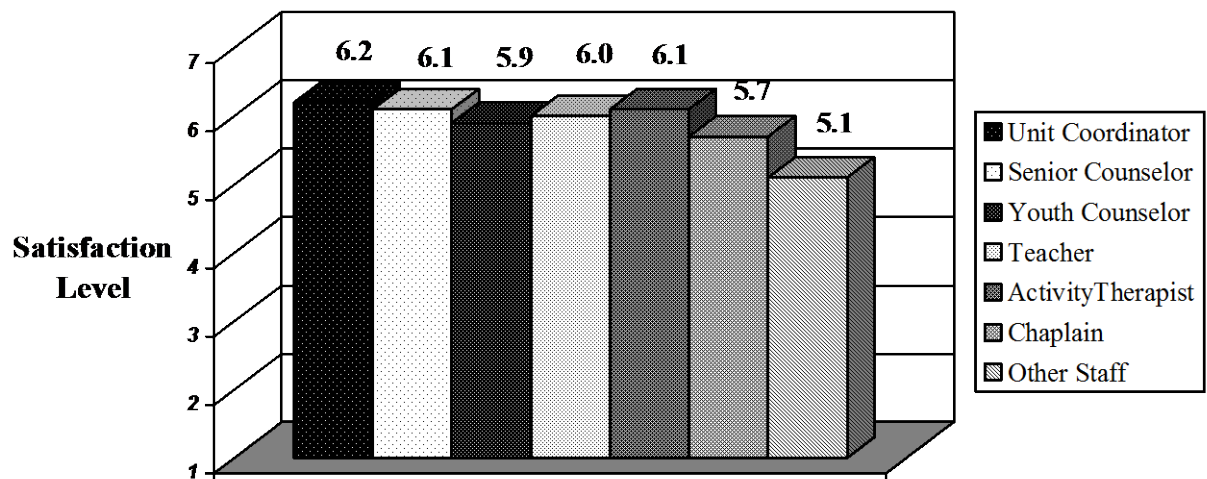
Outcome: Parents indicate a high level of satisfaction with John de la Howe School staff members which reflects on the quality of staff.

Parent Questionnaire-Campus

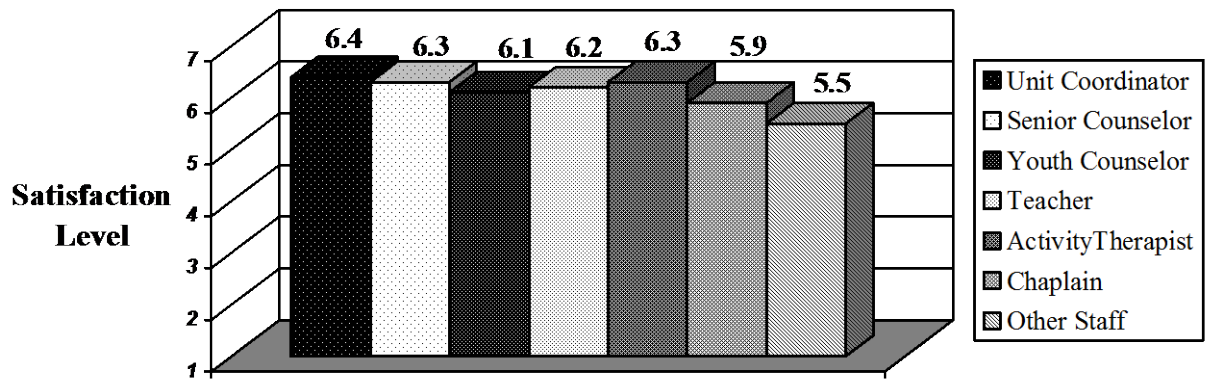
Familiarity With Staff



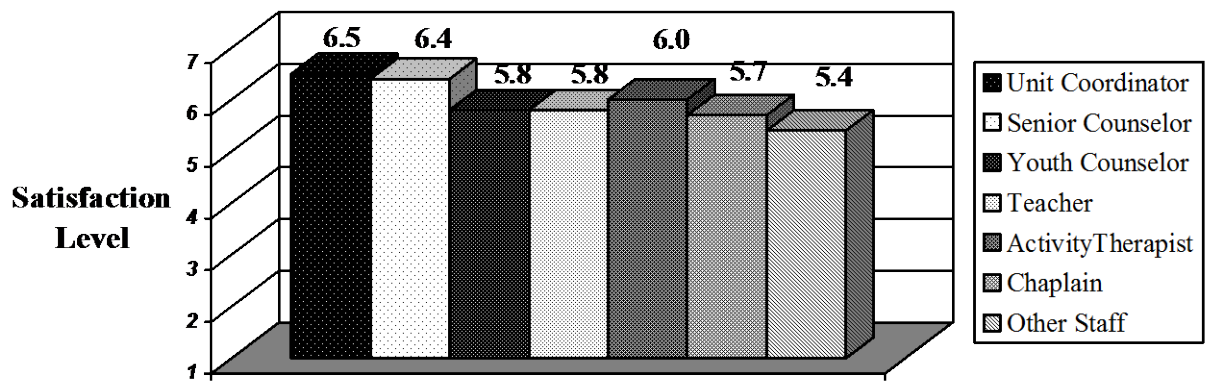
Cooperation/Assistance



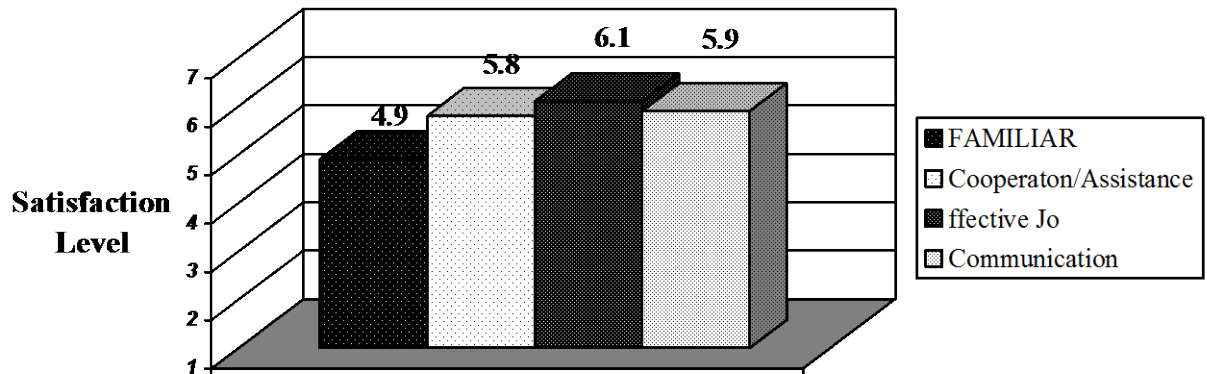
Effective Job Helping Your Child



Communication

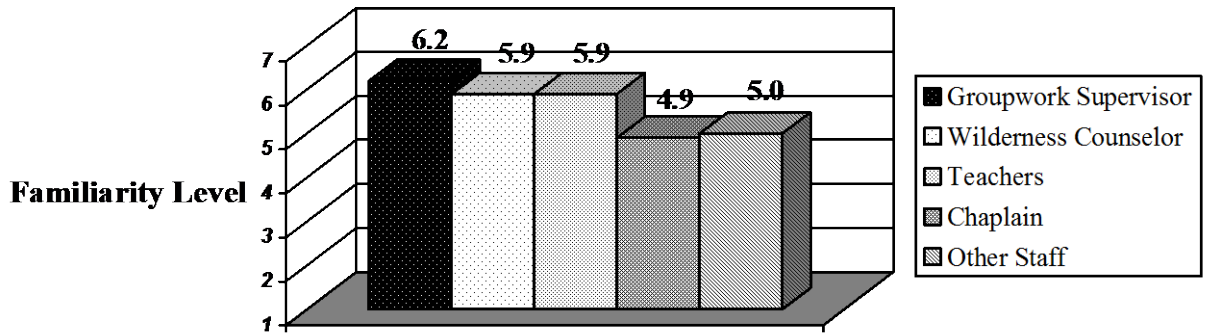


Overall Scores

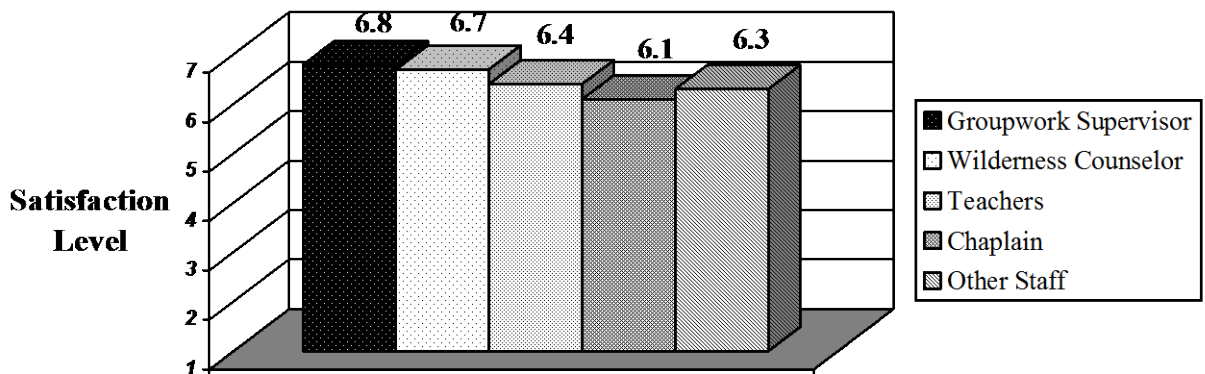


Parent Questionnaire-Wilderness Program

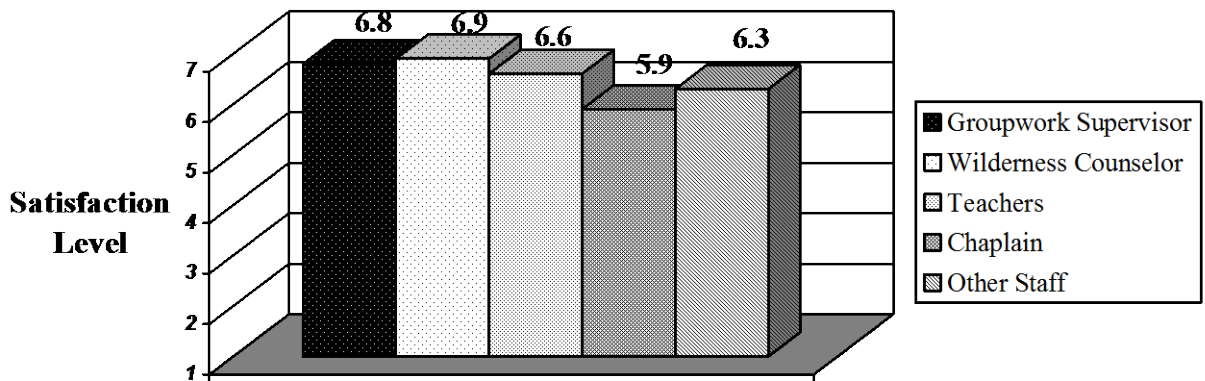
Familiarity With Staff



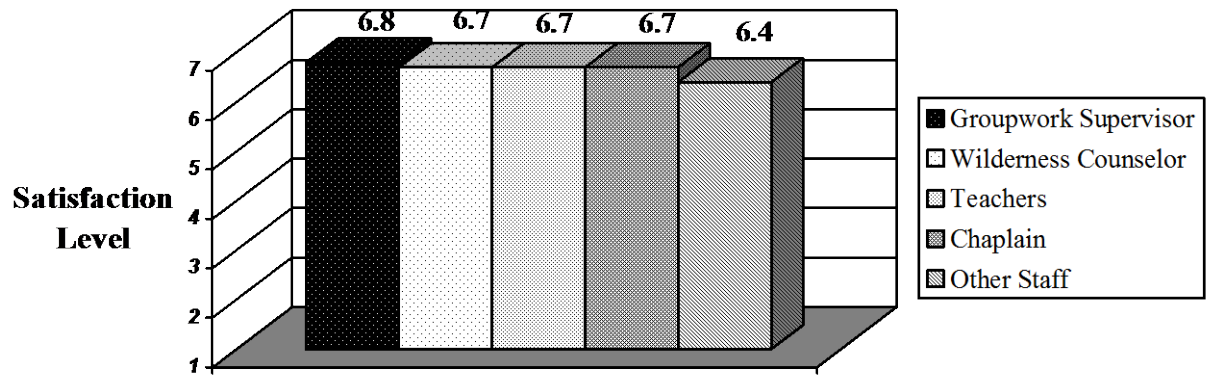
Cooperation/Assistance



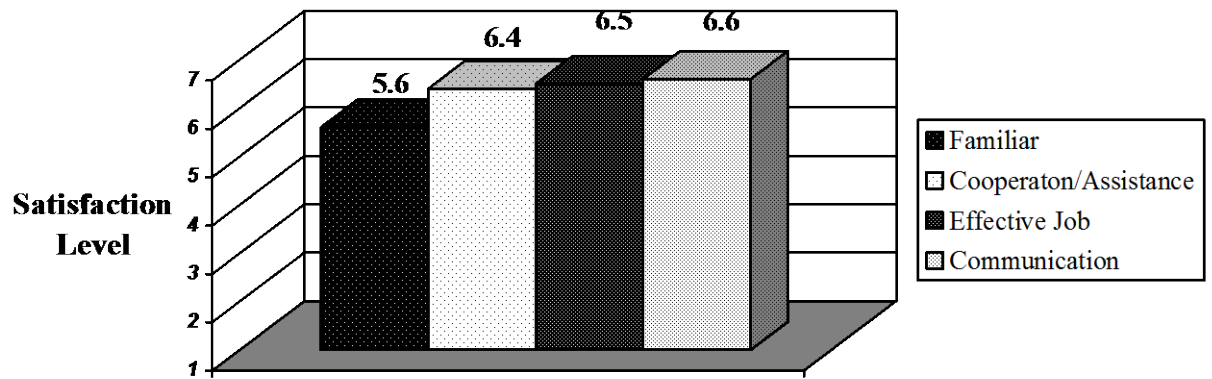
Effective Job Helping Your Child



Communication



Overall Scores



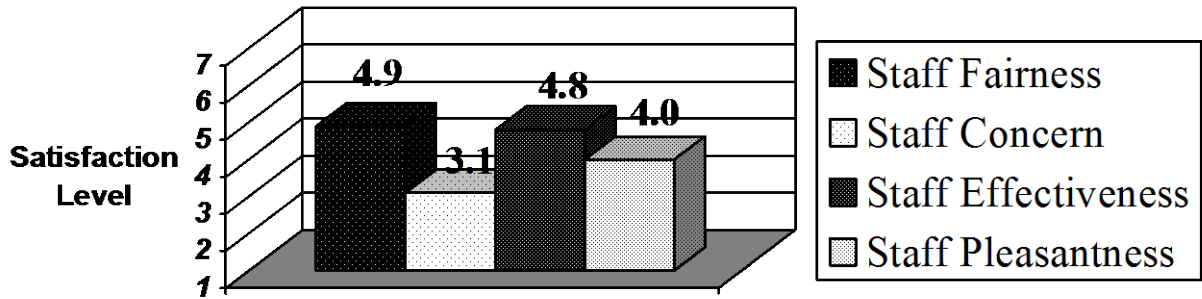
Outcome:

Students indicate a high level of satisfaction with care and concern demonstrated by staff members.

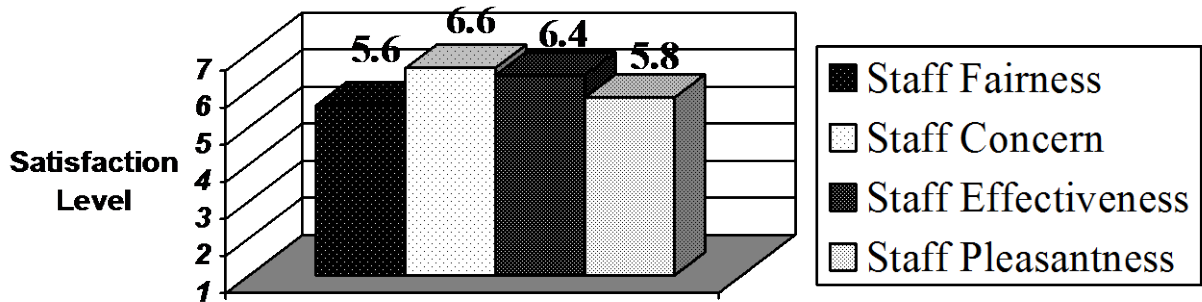
Youth Questionnaire

Baseline

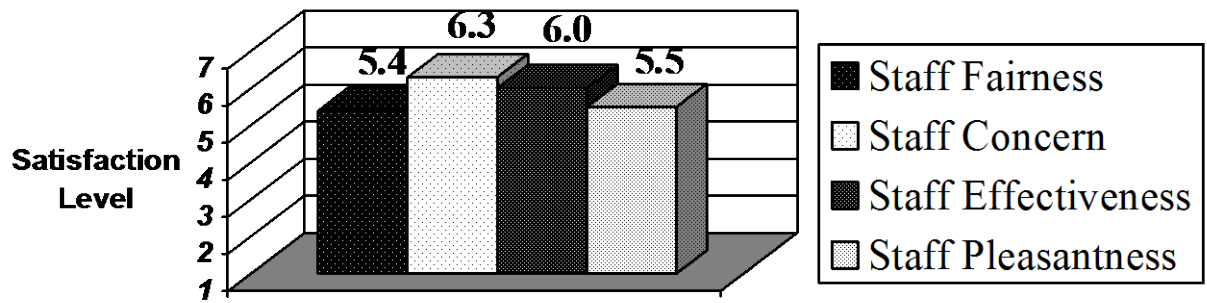
Cottage 1



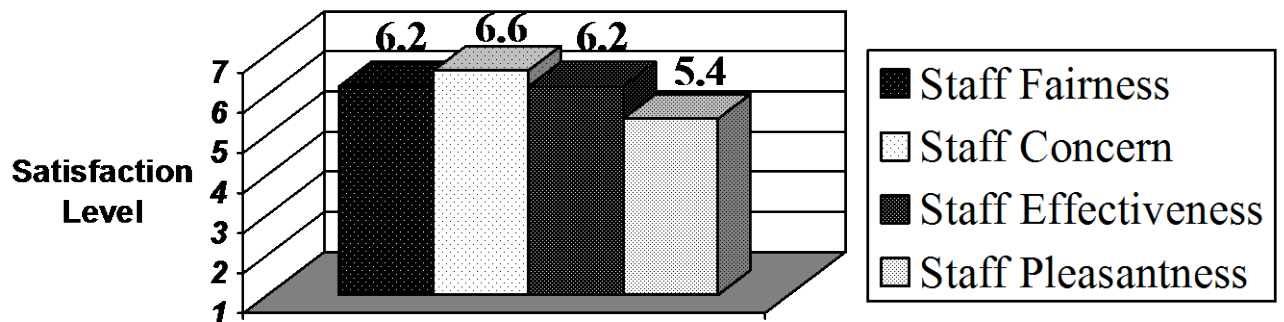
Cottage 2



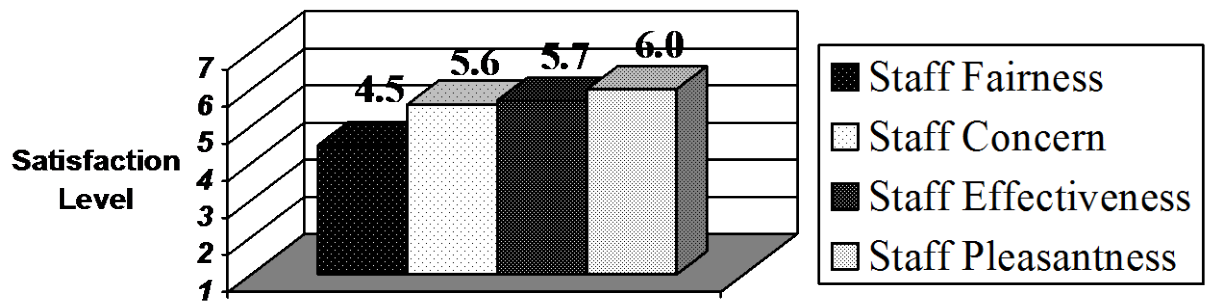
Cottage 3



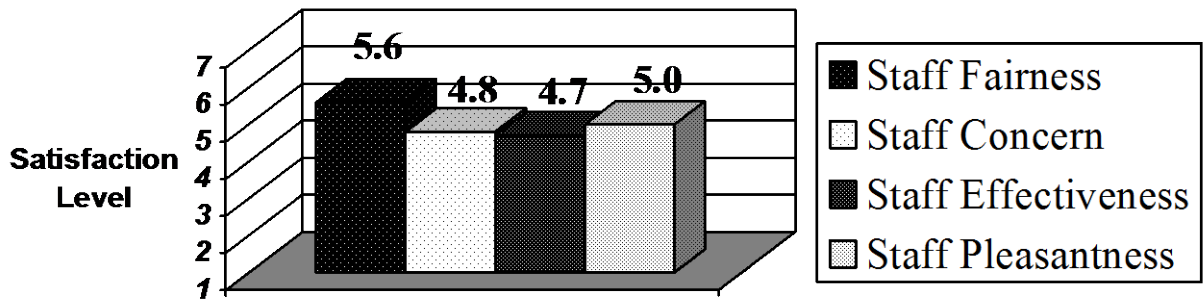
Cottage 4



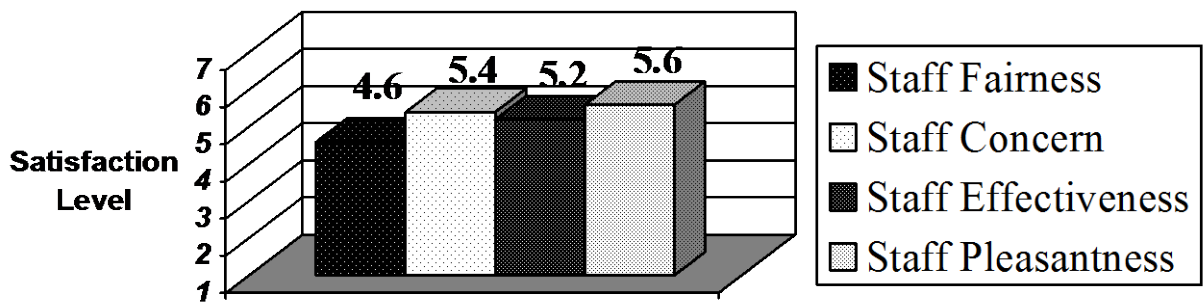
Cottage 5



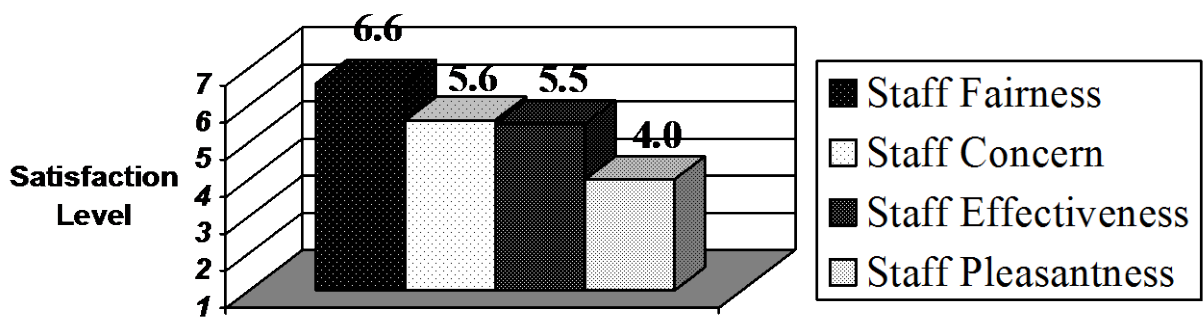
Cottage 6



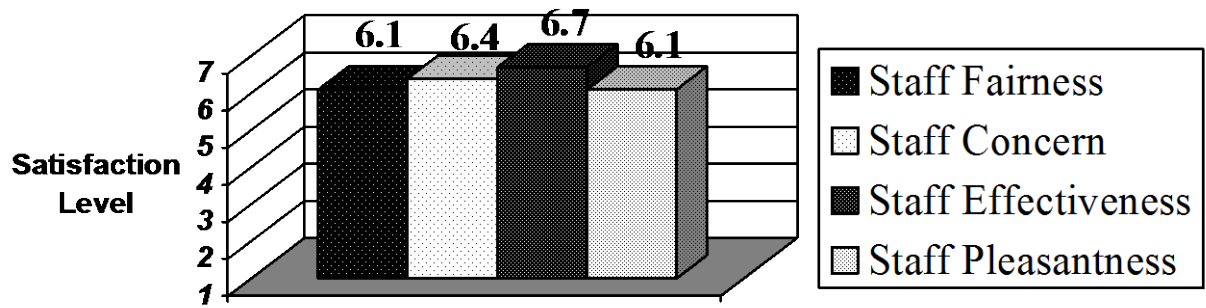
Cottage 7



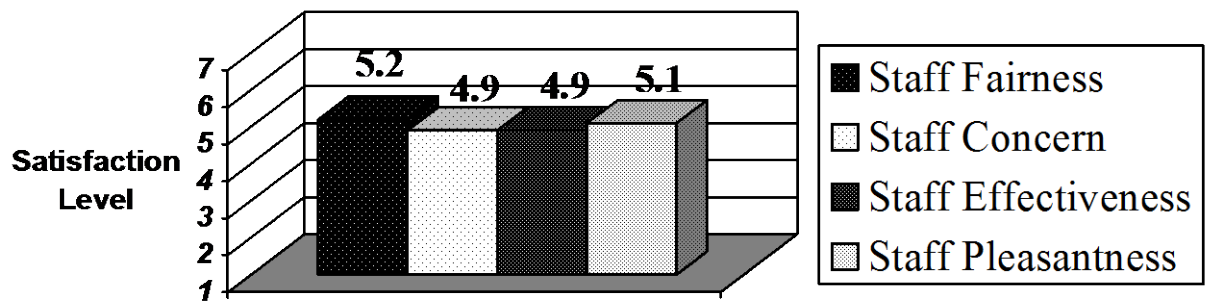
Cottage 8



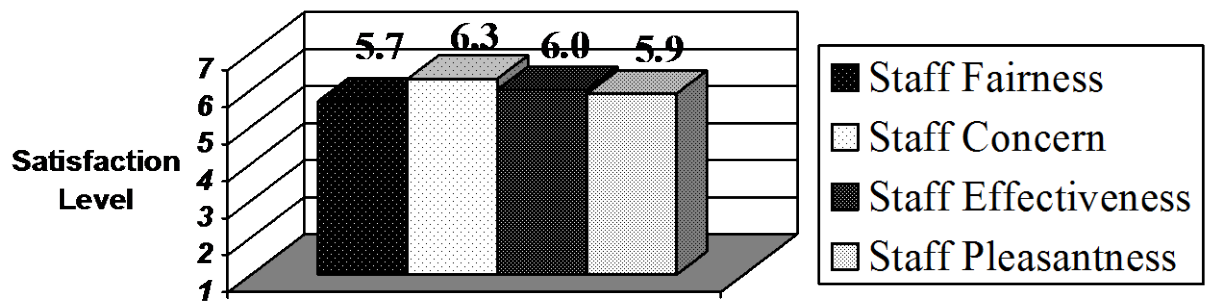
Cottage 9



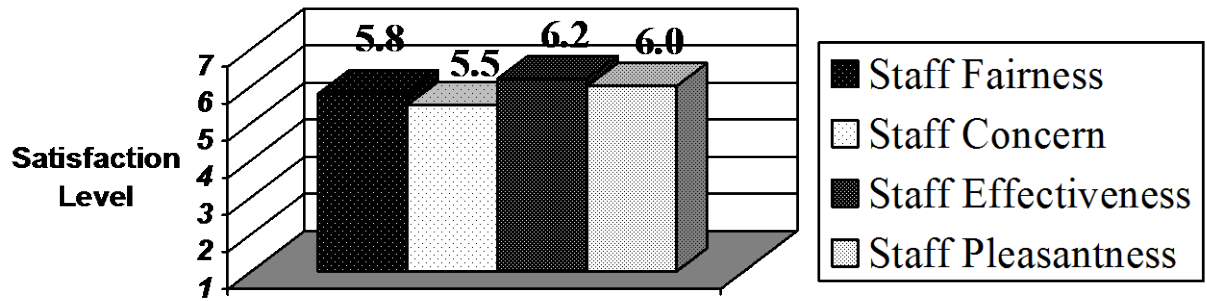
Cottage 10



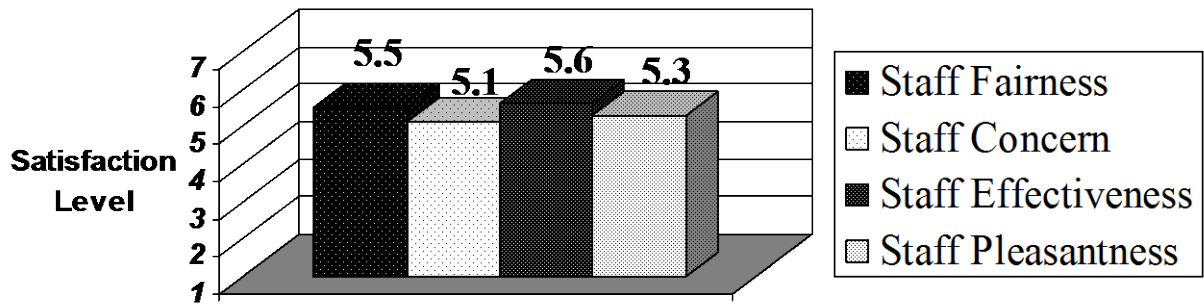
Cottage 11



Cottage 12



Overall



Objective: We will preserve and enhance the facilities and grounds to provide the most therapeutic environment possible.

Performance

Measure: Buildings and grounds will meet or exceed standards for certification by DSS for a residential child caring program.

Outcome: In FY98/99 and FY99/00 John de la Howe School was certified by DSS as having met the standards for a residential child caring program in South Carolina.

JOHN DE LA HOWE SCHOOL

Program Name: Administration

Program Rank: 4

Description: The Superintendent of John de la Howe School is the head of this department and the agency. Some of the duties performed by the Administration Department include public relations, development, coordination of volunteers, information technology management, and quality assurance activities. In essence this is the voice of the agency, discussions regarding quality of services, activities of the agency, and implementation of information technology are generated from this area. The Superintendent also has final approval of all the activities which are performed by the three other departments and serves as the connection to the Board of Trustees.

Total Cost: \$210,167

Cost by Funding Source:

State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted
\$193,369		\$6,689	\$10,109

Goals: To coordinate the activities of the agency so that the intent of the Mission Statement is achieved.

Objective: We will obtain funding and provide resources that enable programs and services to exist.

Performance Measure: Comparison of funds budgeted for the year to the actual amount expended.

Outcome: In FY99/00 the budget presented to and approved by the Senate, House, and Board of Trustees was adequate to fund all the programs of John de la Howe School and meet all of the financial obligations of the agency.

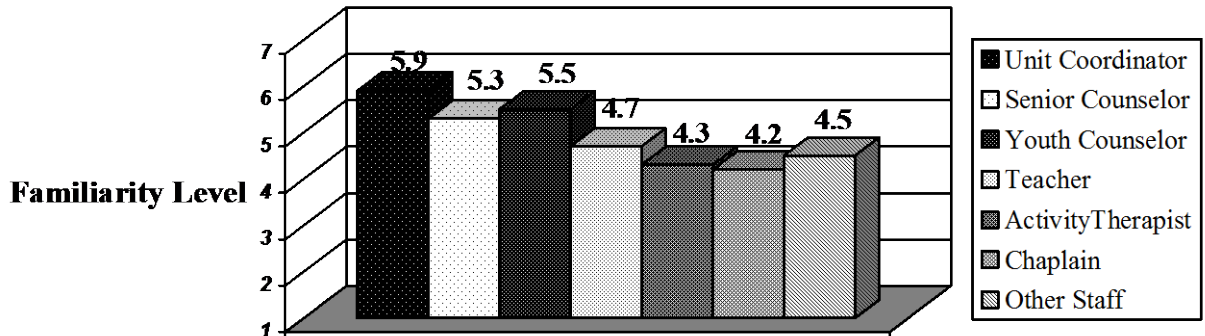
Objective: We will promote and encourage open communication among staff, children, families and the broader community.

Performance Measure: Consumer surveys indicating the level of satisfaction of the students and the parents or placement agency.

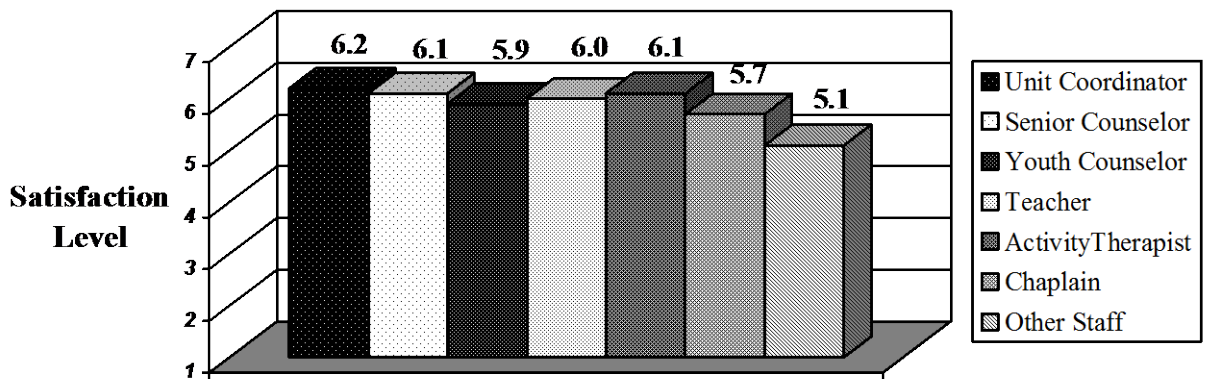
Outcome: Parents and placement agencies indicate a high level of satisfaction with the ability to communicate and become familiar with the staff members responsible for care of their child.

Parent Questionnaire-Campus

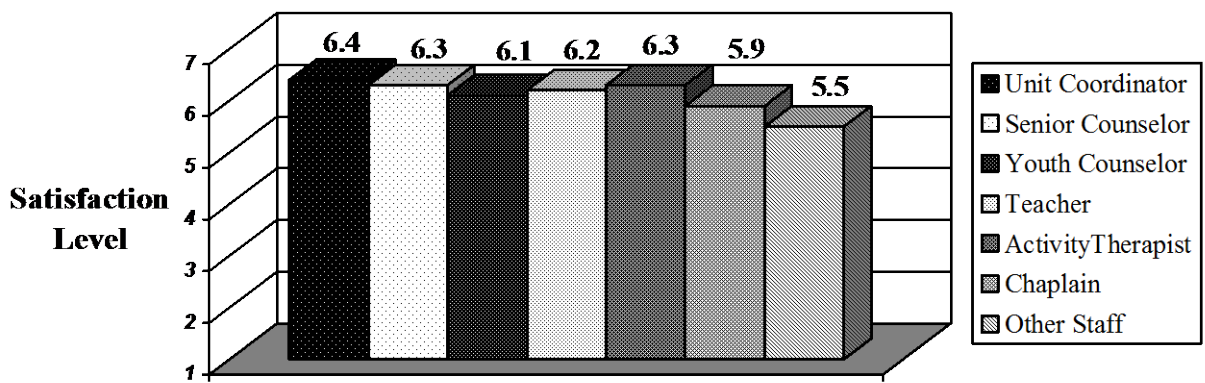
Familiarity With Staff



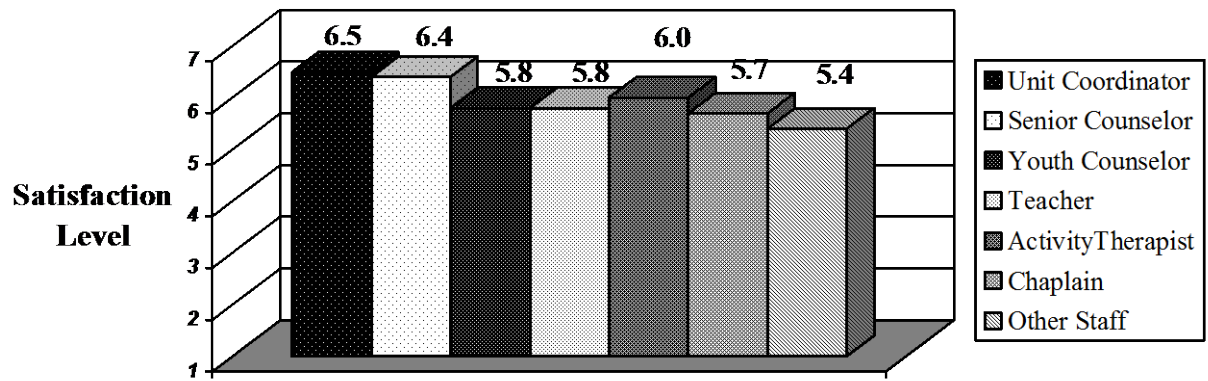
Cooperation/Assistance



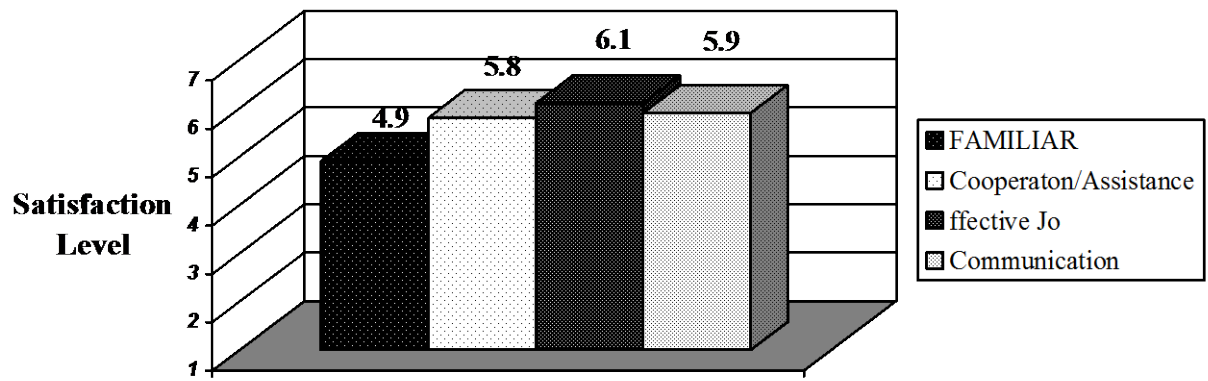
Effective Job Helping Your Child



Communication

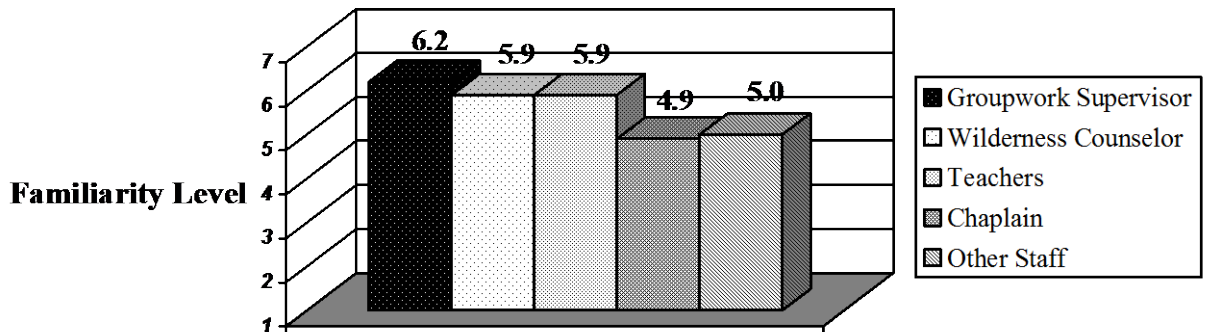


Overall Scores

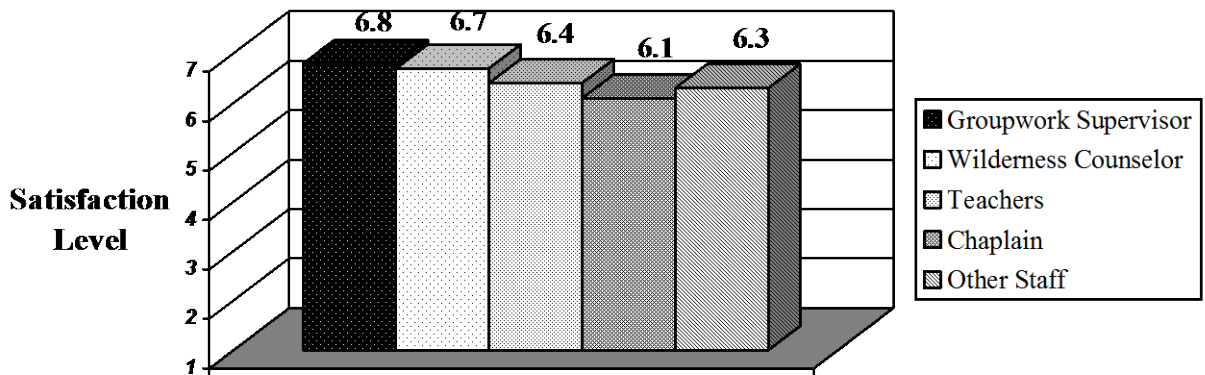


Parent Questionnaire-Wilderness Program

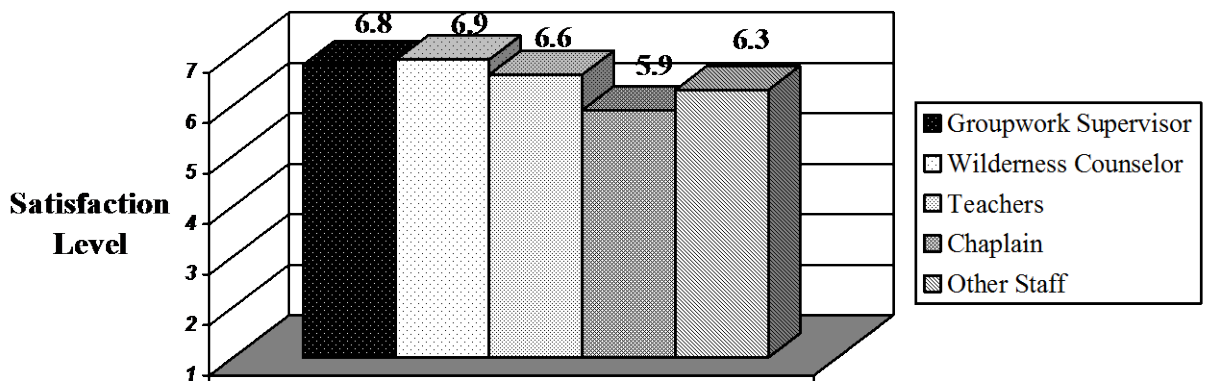
Familiarity With Staff



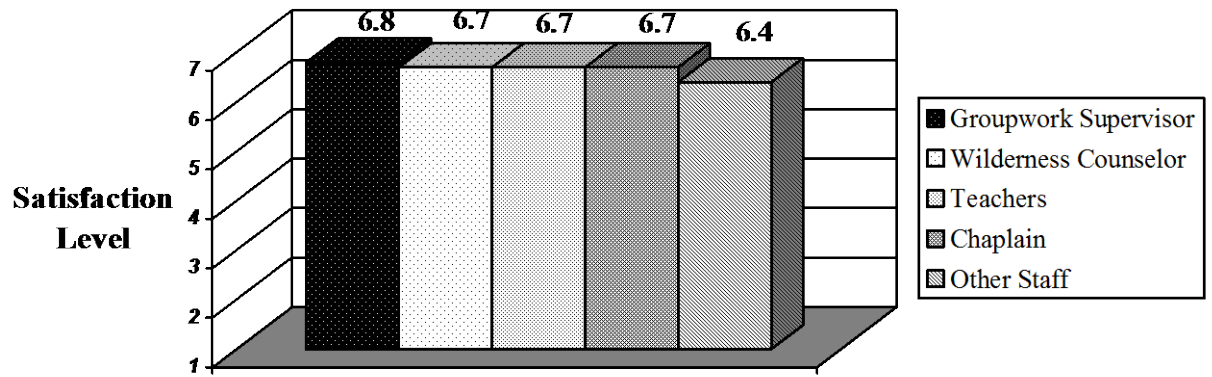
Cooperation/Assistance



Effective Job Helping Your Child



Communication



Overall Scores

